

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 VO-03 EURE-00 CIAE-00 FBIE-00 INSE-00  
NSAE-00 SSO-00 /016 W  
-----021928 116932 /43

O R 021800Z MAR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY ROME  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3089  
INFO AMCONSUL FLORENCE  
AMCONSUL MILAN  
AMCONSUL NAPLES

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ROME 3378

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/WE AND VO

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, CVIS, IT, US  
SUBJECT: VISA APPLICATION OF FLORENCE MAYOR GABBUGGIANI

REF: FLORENCE 0086

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. OUR HANDLING OF THE VISA APPLICATION OF FLORENCE MAYOR ELIO GABBUGGIANI IS BEING WATCHED BY LOCAL OBSERVERS AS A TEST OF THE NEW ADMINISTRATION'S ATTITUDE TOWARDSTHE ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (PCI). ASSUMING THAT A DECISION IS MADE TO GRANT GABBUGGIANI A VISA TO TRAVEL TO THE UNITED STATES, WE BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT THAT THE ACTION BE EXPLAINED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S DESIRE TO BRING OUR PRACTICES INTO CONFORMITY WITH OUR TRADITIONAL PRINCIPLES AND WITH OUR INTERNATIONAL UNDERTAKINGS (I.E. THE HELSINKI ACCORD). END SUMMARY.

2. JUDGING FROM PRESS ATTENTION TO THE ISSUE DURING THE PAST WEEK, IT IS CLEAR THAT THE VISA APPLICATION OF MAYOR GABBUGGIANI TO VISIT THE UNITED STATES IN  
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APRIL IS BEING CAREFULLY WATCHED BY LOCAL OBSERVERS, BOTH ITALIAN AND FOREIGN , FOR CLUES ABOUT CHANGES IN THE US POSITION TOWARDS THE PCI. IN PARTICULAR, POSITIVE ACTION ON THE VISA REQUEST, COMING EARLY ON IN THE NEW ADMINISTRATION, WILL BE VIEWED BY THOSE WHO ARE LIKING FOR SUCH AN INDICATION, AS SIGNALLING A CHANGE IN THE US ATTITUDE TOWARD THE PCI, I.E. USG

ACCEPTANCE OF THE PCI AS A DEMOCRATIC PARTY. SOME WILL CONCLUDE THAT IT REFLECTS FULFILLMENT OF PANORAMA'S PROPHECY OF LAST NOVEMBER THAT THE THAW BETWEEN THE US AND PCI WILL BEGIN IN FLORENCE.

3. ASSUMING THAT A DECISION IS MADE TO GRANT A WAIVER TO PERMIT THE ISSUANCE OF A VISA TO GABBUGGIANI, THE MANNER IN WHICH THE ACTION IS EXPLAINED WILL BE IMPORTANT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE ITALIAN POLITICAL SITUATION. ACCORDINGLY WE STRONGLY RECOMEND THAT THE DEPARTMENT BE PREPARED TO EXPLAIN THE GRANTING OF A VISA TO GABBUGGIANI IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE DESIRE OF THE NEW ADMINISTRATION TO BRING OUR WORLDWIDE VISA PRACTICES INTO CONFORMITY WITH OUR INTERNATIONAL UNDERTAKINGS (I.E. THE HELSINKI ACCORD) AND WITH OUR TRADITIONAL PRINCIPLES, AND THAT IT IS NOT AND SHOULD NOT BE INTERPRETED AS A STATEMENT OF OUR VIEWS ON THE ITALIAN OR ANY OTHER COMMUNIST PARTY. IN SO DOING, DEPARTMENT MIGHT WISH TO DRAW ATTENTION TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S PRESS CONFERENCE OF FEBRUARY 23 AT WHICH HE SAID, "WE ARE OURSELVES, CULPABLE IN SOME WAYS FOR NOT GIVING PEOPLE ADEQUATE RIGHT TO MOVE AROUND OUR COUNTRY, OR RESTRICTING UNNECESSARILY, IN MY OPINION, VISITATION TO THIS COUNTRY BY THOSE WHO DISAGREE WITH US POLITICALLY."

4. IN RESPONSE TO PRESS INQUIRIES ON THE GABBUGGIANI VISA APPLICATION, WE ARE CONFIRMING THAT CONSULATE FLORENCE HAS RECEIVED IT AND THAT IT IS CURRENTLY BEING PROCESSED IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDARD PROCEDURES.  
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WE ARE REFERRING REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO WASHINGTON.

5. WE WISH TO DRAW DEPARTMENT'S ATTENTION TO THE INVITATION GABBUGGIANI HAS RECEIVED TO SPEAK AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN. DEPARMENT MIGHT WISH TO INFORM SPONSOR (PROF. ROBERT PUTNAM) THAT GABBUGGIANI WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES (REPUBLICAN AND CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT) WHO MIGHT ALSO BE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM THAT IS BEING PLANNED.BEAUDRY

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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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